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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/782,426

Applicant(s)

LEE ET AL.

Examiner

KISHIN G. BELANI

Art Unit

2143

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 February 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-52 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of provisional application submitted on 2/21/2003 under 35 U.S.C. 119(e), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 10, 14, 19, 35 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)**.

Consider **claim 1**, Sellen et al. show and disclose a method of directing communications in a communications network (Figs. 1-2 that show delivery via a digital communication network 32 (shown in Fig. 2) of a digital photograph 18 attached to an

e-mail message 19 (both shown in Fig. 1); paragraph 0009 summarizing the delivery method); comprising:

identifying a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network (Fig. 1, items marked 20, identifying a plurality of non-unique receivers' identifiers such as Gran, Mum, Jane and John; paragraphs 0050-0051 that disclose Recipient Selection Menu 12 (in Fig. 1) for identifying a non-unique receiver from a 'contacts' database either local to an electronic device or on a remote web-server, in a receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network);

retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication (Fig. 1 showing a non-unique receiver identifier menu 12; paragraph 0052 that discloses retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication);

associating the non-unique receiver identifier with a unique receiver identifier using a record associated with the user (Fig. 1, menu 12; paragraphs 0051-0052 that further disclose associating the non-unique receiver identifier with a unique receiver identifier (e-mail address of recipient) using a record ('contacts') associated with the user); and connecting the communication to the unique receiver identifier via the communications network (Fig. 1, Delivery Format Selection Menu 14, type 28 (E-mail); paragraph 0059 that discloses the details of the e-mail delivery method).

Consider **claim 2**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the user communicates with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier without transmitting the unique receiver identifier over the communications network (Fig. 1, items marked 18-20 and 28; paragraphs 0030-0033, 0036, 0037, 0041, 0043, 0051-0052 and 0059 which further disclose that the user communicates with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier without transmitting the unique receiver identifier over the communications network).

Consider **claim 4**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein using a non-unique identifier renders the communication at least partially anonymous (Fig. 1, items marked 20 that show using non-unique identifiers Gran, Mum, Jane and John being used in place of recipients' actual e-mail addresses, thereby shielding their e-mail address identity; paragraph 0052 disclose the same details).

Consider **claim 5**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is initiated through an electronic mail client (Fig. 2 showing sender's PDA 30 wirelessly connected to the Internet 32; paragraphs 0056 and 0059 which disclose that the Delivery Format Selection Menu 14 includes e-mail delivery, thereby disclosing that the communication is initiated through an electronic mail client).

Consider **claim 6**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is initiated through a wireless device (Fig. 2 showing sender's PDA 30 wirelessly connected to the Internet 32; paragraphs 0056 and 0059 which disclose that the Delivery Format Selection Menu 14 includes e-mail delivery, thereby disclosing that the communication is initiated through a wireless device).

Consider **claim 10**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is received through a wireless device (Fig. 2 showing a digital photo frame 38 with an LCD flat panel within a frame and means (wireless transceiver) for receiving e-mails with attached digital photographs; paragraph 0011 which discloses the same details).

Consider **claim 14**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, further including:
allowing the user to create a non-unique receiver identifier associated with a receiver (Fig. 1, list of recipients 20; paragraph 0051 which discloses a 'contacts' database locally maintained by the user on an electronic device, thereby disclosing allowing the user to create a non-unique receiver identifier associated with a receiver).

Consider **claim 19**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, further including:

allowing the user to change a unique identifier associated with a receiver and updating one or more records that point to the unique identifier (paragraph 0053 which discloses that the provider of the web server will arrange for the contact details to be periodically updated by the user).

Consider **claim 35**, Sellen et al. show and disclose a program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps of directing communications in a communications network (Claim 12 that claims a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method listed below; Figs. 1-2 that show delivery via a digital communication network 32 (shown in Fig. 2) of a digital photograph 18 attached to an e-mail message 19 (both shown in Fig. 1); paragraph 0009 summarizing the delivery method), comprising:

identifying a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network (Fig. 1, items marked 20, identifying a plurality of non-unique receivers' identifiers such as Gran, Mum, Jane and John; paragraphs 0050-0051 that disclose Recipient Selection Menu 12 (in Fig. 1) for identifying a non-unique receiver from a 'contacts' database either local to an electronic device or on a remote web-server, in a receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network);

retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication (Fig. 1 showing a non-unique receiver identifier menu 12;

paragraph 0052 that discloses retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication);

associating the non-unique receiver identifier with a unique receiver identifier in record associated with the user (Fig. 1, menu 12; paragraphs 0051-0052 that further disclose associating the non-unique receiver identifier with a unique receiver identifier (e-mail address of recipient) using a record ('contacts') associated with the user); and connecting the communication to the unique receiver identifier via the communications network (Fig. 1, Delivery Format Selection Menu 14, type 28 (E-mail); paragraph 0059 that discloses the details of the e-mail delivery method).

Consider **claim 36**, and **as it applies to claim 35 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed program storage device, wherein the user communicates with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier without transmitting the unique receiver identifier over the communications network (Fig. 1, items marked 18-20 and 28; paragraphs 0030-0033, 0036, 0037, 0041, 0043, 0051-0052 and 0059 which further disclose that the user communicates with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier without transmitting the unique receiver identifier over the communications network).

Claims 39 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by **Yairi (US Patent Application Publication # 2002/0152272 A1)**.

Consider **claim 39**, Yairi shows and discloses a system for directing communications in a communications network (Fig. 1 that shows an e-mail delivery system with Mail Server 102, Mail Proxy Server 104, Database 106 and a receiver client 108; paragraph 0014 discloses the details of the system shown in Fig. 1); comprising: a server engine operable to identify a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network and operable to map a non-unique receiver identifier to a unique receiver identifier, the server engine further operable to direct communication to a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier (Mail Proxy Server 104 shown in Fig. 1 that acts as a server engine; Alias Mapping Module 104a that identifies and maps a non-unique receiver identifier in a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network and operable to map a non-unique receiver identifier to a unique receiver identifier; paragraphs 0014-0016 disclose the same details, including directing communication to a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier).

Consider **claim 40**, and as it applies to **claim 39** above, Yairi shows and discloses the claimed system, further including:

- a client repository for storing user information including at least a client record identifier and one or more unique user identifiers (Fig. 1, database 106 that acts as a client repository for storing user information including a client record identifier and one or more unique user identifiers (Main Address client records));
- a mapping repository for storing at least one or more non-unique receiver identifiers

associated with the client record identifier and mapped to one or more unique receiver identifiers by an index to the user information stored in the client repository, wherein the server engine maps the non-unique receiver identifier to the unique receiver identifier by retrieving the index in the mapping repository and indexing the unique receiver identifier in the client repository (Fig. 1, alias mapping module 104a along with database 106 for storing at least one or more non-unique receiver identifiers associated with the client record identifier and mapped to one or more unique receiver identifiers by an index to the user information stored in the client repository, wherein the server engine maps the non-unique receiver identifier to the unique receiver identifier by retrieving the index in the mapping repository and indexing the unique receiver identifier in the client repository; paragraphs 0014-0016 further disclose the same details; flowchart of Fig. 2, steps 204-208 also describe the alias mapping details).

Claim 52 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by **Maxwell (US Patent Publication # 5,805,810)**.

Consider **claim 52**, Maxwell shows and discloses a method of directing communications in a communications network (abstract that describes directing communications in a communications network, Fig. 2 shows the communications network; column 4, lines 30-42 further disclose the details of the claimed method), comprising:
receiving communication recipient's receiver identifier in a communication between a

sender and a receiver, the receiver identifier being not necessarily unique (Fig. 14 that shows a communication recipient's receiver identifier (mom in column 1430) in a communication between a sender and a receiver, the receiver identifier being not necessarily unique; column 13, lines 33-67 disclose the same details); determining communication recipient's unique identifier (recipient address in column 1440 of Fig. 14) associated with the communication recipient's receiver identifier (mom in column 1430) from one or more data records associated with at least one of the sender (Jeff in column 1410) or the receiver (Marcia Baris in column 1450); flowcharts of Figs. 6-8 further describe the process of determining communication recipient's unique identifier; column 13, lines 33-67 disclose the same details); and directing the communication to the communication recipient's unique identifier (Fig. 2 that shows a Mail Object from a Message Validator 22 being sent to a print server for delivery as a printed message sent via postal mail to the unique mailing address of the recipient found in Fig. 14; column 5, lines 43-60 disclose the same details).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 3, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20-22, 29-32 and 42-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Yairi (US Patent Publication # 2002/0152272 A1)**.

Consider **claim 3**, and as it applies to **claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein the user is enabled to receive a communication from another user without requiring a transmission of a unique identifier associated with the other user over the communications network.

In the same field of endeavor, Yairi discloses the claimed method, wherein the user is enabled to receive a communication from another user without requiring a transmission of a unique identifier associated with the other user over the communications network (Fig. 4, messages 412-414 which show non-unique sender addresses, paragraph 0019 disclose the same details, thereby teaching that the user is enabled to receive a communication from another user without requiring a transmission of a unique identifier associated with the other user over the communications network).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to enable the user to receive a communication from another user without requiring a transmission of a unique identifier associated with the other user over the communications network, as taught by Yairi, in the method of Sellen et al., so as to maintain anonymity of a sender.

Consider **claim 9**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein the communication is received through an electronic mail client.

In the same field of endeavor, Yairi discloses the claimed method, wherein the communication is received through an electronic mail client (Fig. 1, recipient's computer 108 showing electronic mail software; paragraph 0015 which discloses the same details).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to receive the communication through an electronic

mail client, as taught by Yairi, in the method of Sellen et al., since receiving communication via an electronic mail client is one of the most popular and cost effective method of communication.

Consider **claim 12**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, further disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is received through a web browser (in Yairi reference, Fig. 3, address field "http://www.emailaddressinformation.com") that corresponds to an address for a Web site; paragraph 0017 discloses the same details).

Consider **claim 13**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, disclose the claimed method, further including:
providing a service provider network residing on the communications network for performing the identifying, the retrieving, the associating, and the connecting (in Yairi reference, Fig. 1, Mail Proxy Server 104 with Alias Mapping Module 104a and Database 106; paragraphs 0014 and 0016 that disclose the details of a service provider network residing on the communications network for identifying, retrieving, associating, and connecting an e-mail using an alias for a recipient's e-mail address).

Consider **claim 15**, and **as it applies to claim 13 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, further disclose the claimed method, wherein the user initiates the communication via an electronic mail client (in Sellen et al. reference, Fig. 2 showing

sender's PDA 30 wirelessly connected to the Internet 32; paragraphs 0056 and 0059 which disclose that the Delivery Format Selection Menu 14 includes e-mail delivery, thereby disclosing that the communication is initiated through an electronic mail client).

Consider **claim 16**, and **as it applies to claim 13 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, further disclose the claimed method, wherein the user initiates the communication via a wireless device (in Sellen et al. reference, Fig. 2 showing sender's PDA 30 wirelessly connected to the Internet 32; paragraphs 0056 and 0059 which disclose that the Delivery Format Selection Menu 14 includes e-mail delivery, thereby disclosing that the communication is initiated through a wireless device).

Consider **claim 20**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, further disclose the claimed method, wherein the user uses a plurality of non-unique identifiers to represent a single unique receiver (in Yairi reference, Fig. 3 showing a plurality of aliases (JS, J521, J621 and J721) in use for recipient John Smith; paragraph 0017 discloses the same details).

Consider **claim 21**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, further disclose the claimed method, wherein a plurality of unique users use a plurality of non-unique identifiers to represent a single common receiver (in Yairi reference, flowchart of Fig. 2, steps 204-208; paragraph 0016, lines 14-17 which

disclose e-mail messages addressed to different e-mail addresses being delivered to a single user e-mail inbox).

Consider **claim 22**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, further disclose the claimed method, wherein a plurality of unique users use a single non-unique receiver identifier to represent a single unique receiver (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4, messages marked 410-414 from a plurality of unique users for a single non-unique receiver identifier 402 (J521); paragraph 0019 discloses the same details).

Consider **claim 29**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, disclose the claimed method, further including:
allowing the user and a receiver to communicate with one another using only the non-unique receiver identifier (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4, sent message to Acme Widgets marked 406 and received message (by J521) from Acme Widgets marked 410 which show that the user and a receiver communicate with one another using only the non-unique receiver identifier (J521); paragraph 0019 discloses the same details).

Consider **claim 30**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, disclose the claimed method, further including:
allowing the user to disable further communication from a receiver associated with the non-unique receiver identifier (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4, sent message to Acme Widgets

(a receiver associated with the non-unique receiver identifier) marked 406, received messages (by J521) marked 410-414 including message 410 from Acme Widgets and "Delete Alias" button 416 used for deleting the user's aliases; paragraph 0019 which discloses that the user initially sent an e-mail order to Acme Widgets using alias J521; later when the user receives e-mails not only from Acme Widgets but other spammers as well, he has the option to delete the used alias J521, thereby disabling further communication from a receiver associated with the non-unique receiver identifier).

Consider **claim 31**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, disclose the claimed method, further including:

allowing a receiver associated with the non-unique receiver identifier to disable further communication from the user (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4, alias 402 (J521), "Delete Alias" button 416 that enables the receiver John Smith to disable further communication from Acme Widgets; paragraph 0020 discloses the same details).

Consider **claim 32**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, disclose the claimed method, wherein the connecting further includes allowing a receiver associated with the non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with the user using the non-unique receiver identifier and a non-unique identifier associated with the user (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4 that shows a non-unique identifier J521 of receiver John Smith and a non-unique identifier of user Acme Widgets, communicating with each

other (sent message 406 and received message 410) using non-unique identifiers of each other; paragraphs 0019-0020 disclose the same details).

Consider **claim 42**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, disclose the claimed method, further including:

associating a unique identifier of the user to a non-unique identifier of the user (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4, non-unique (J521) identifier 402 as an alias for unique identifier 304 JS@Nokia.com shown in Fig. 3); and

the connecting includes connecting the communication to the unique receiver identifier (e-mail address for Acme Widgets in the message 406 sent by John Smith to Acme Widgets) via the communications network (shown in Fig. 2) and presenting the non-unique identifier (J521) of the user to the receiver (Acme Widgets), wherein the unique identifier (JS@Nokia.com) of the user is not revealed to the receiver; paragraph 0019-0020 further disclose the details of the claim).

Consider **claim 43**, and **as it applies to claim 35 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, show and disclose a program storage device further including: associating a unique identifier of the user to a non-unique identifier of the user (in Yairi reference, claim 12; Fig. 4, non-unique (J521) identifier 402 as an alias for unique identifier 304 JS@Nokia.com shown in Fig. 3); the connecting includes connecting the communication to the unique receiver identifier (e-mail address for Acme Widgets in the message 406 sent by John Smith to Acme

Widgets) via the communications network (shown in Fig. 2) and presenting the non-unique identifier (J521) of the user to the receiver (Acme Widgets), wherein the unique identifier (JS@Nokia.com) of the user is not revealed to the receiver; paragraph 0019-0020 further disclose the details of the claim).

Consider **claim 44**, and **as it applies to claim 39 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Yairi, show and disclose the claimed system, wherein the server engine is further operable to map a unique identifier of the user to a non-unique identifier of the user (in Yairi reference, Fig. 2 that shows Mail Proxy Server Engine 104 coupled to Database 106 for mapping unique e-mail addresses into non-unique e-mail aliases; Fig. 4, non-unique (J521) e-mail identifier 402 as an alias for unique e-mail address 304 (JS@Nokia.com shown in Fig. 3); paragraph 0017 further discloses the details of the claim); and wherein the server engine directs communication to a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier and presents the non-unique identifier of the user without presenting the unique identifier of the user (in Yairi reference, Fig. 4, e-mail message 406 with the non-unique identifier of the user (J521) being directed by the server engine to a receiver Acme Widgets associated with the unique receiver e-mail identifier, thereby not revealing the unique identifier of the user).

Claims 7, 11 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Agraharam et al. (US Patent Publication # 6,085,231)**.

Consider **claim 7**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein the communication is initiated through a voice device.

In the same field of endeavor, Agraharam et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is initiated through a voice device (Fig. 1 showing caller's telephone marked 101, column 2, lines 22-42 that disclose the details of the claimed invention, including a caller initiating the communication through a voice device).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to initiate the communication through a voice device, as taught by Agraharam et al., in the method of Sellen et al., so as to provide a plurality of communication options to a caller.

Consider **claim 11**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein the communication is received through a voice device.

In the same field of endeavor, Agraharam et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is received through a voice device (Fig. 1 showing recipient's telephone marked 104, column 2, lines 22-42 that disclose the details of the claimed invention, including a recipient receiving the communication through a voice device).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to receive the communication through a voice device, as taught by Agraharam et al., in the method of Sellen et al., so as to provide a plurality of communication options to a recipient.

Consider **claim 17**, and **as it applies to claim 13 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Agraharam et al., further disclose the claimed method, wherein the user initiates the communication via a voice device (in Agraharam et al. reference, Fig. 1 showing caller's telephone marked 101, column 2, lines 22-42 that disclose the details of the claimed invention, including a caller initiating the communication through a voice device).

Claims 8, 18 and 26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Levosky et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2002/0087641 A1)**.

Consider **claim 8**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein the communication is initiated through a web browser.

In the same field of endeavor, Levosky et al. disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is initiated through a web browser (paragraph 0070 which discloses WEB-based Email initiation using sites like Hotmail and Yahoo).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to initiate the communication through a web browser, as taught by Levosky et al., in the method of Sellen et al., so as to provide a plurality of communication options to a sender.

Consider **claim 18**, and **as it applies to claim 13 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Levosky et al., further disclose the claimed method, wherein the user initiates the communication via a web browser (in Levosky et al. reference, paragraph 0070 which discloses WEB-based Email initiation using sites like Hotmail and Yahoo).

Consider **claim 26**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Levosky et al., further disclose the claimed method, wherein a non-unique receiver identifier created is distributed across a network of a plurality of service providers (in Levosky et al. reference, Fig. 2, block 4 that shows an Internet Service Provider 1 for the sender and a different Internet Service Provider 2 for the receiver in block 14, thereby disclosing that a non-unique receiver identifier created (shown at Alias E-mail Server 100) is distributed across a network of a plurality of service providers; paragraphs 0035, 0036 and 0039 further disclose the details of the claimed method).

Consider **claim 27**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Levosky et al., further disclose the claimed method, wherein the identifying, the retrieving, the associating, and the communicating is performed across a distributed

network of multiple service providers (in Levosky et al. reference, Fig. 2, block 4 that shows an Internet Service Provider 1 for the sender and a different Internet Service Provider 2 for the receiver in block 14, as well as an Alias E-mail Server 100, thereby disclosing that the identifying, the retrieving, the associating, and the communicating is performed across a distributed network of multiple service providers; paragraph 0039 further discloses the details of the claimed method).

Consider **claim 28**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Levosky et al., further disclose the claimed method, wherein the communication is performed independent of a specific service provider in a distributed network (in Levosky et al. reference, Fig. 2, block 4 that shows an Internet Service Provider 1 for the sender and a different Internet Service Provider 2 for the receiver in block 14, as well as an Alias E-mail Server 100; paragraph 0038 which discloses that the communication is performed independent of a specific service provider in a distributed network by an Alias E-mail Server 100).

Claims 23, 25, 33, 34, 37, 38 and 45-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Maxwell (US Patent Publication # 5,805,810)**.

Consider **claim 23**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein a plurality of unique users use a single non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with a plurality of unique receivers.

In the same field of endeavor, Maxwell discloses the claimed method, wherein a plurality of unique users use a single non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with a plurality of unique receivers (Table of Fig. 14, first two data rows for two different users that show a single non-unique recipient nickname 'mom' used by different users to communicate with a plurality of unique receivers (Marcia Baris and Miriam Struhl); column 13, lines 32-67 disclose the same details).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow a plurality of unique users to use a single non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with a plurality of unique receivers, as taught by Maxwell, in the method of Sellen et al., so as to provide easy to remember recipients' aliases of their e-mail addresses for a user.

Consider **claim 25**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, further disclose the claimed method, wherein a user is enabled to create and use a non-unique receiver identifier regardless of one or more non-unique receiver identifiers created by other users (Table of Fig. 14, first two data rows for two different users that show a single non-unique recipient nickname 'mom' used by different users to communicate with a plurality of unique receivers (Marcia Baris and Miriam Struhl); column 13, lines 32-67 disclose the same details, thereby disclosing that a user (Jeff) is

enabled to create and use a non-unique receiver identifier (mom) regardless of one or more non-unique receiver identifiers created by other users (Txs)).

Consider **claim 33**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, disclose the claimed method, further including:
determining if the user is a registered user, and if it is determined that the user is not a registered user, requesting the user to register (in Maxwell reference, column 8, lines 52-58 which disclose that if the sender is not a registered user of system 10, an e-mail message will be returned to the sender, requesting the necessary information to register the sender; column 13, lines 33-37 which further disclose that the message validator 22 (shown in Fig. 2) also checks the recipient database 1400 (shown in Fig. 14) to determine whether recipients identified in the e-mail messages by senders have been previously registered with the system 10).

Consider **claim 34**, and **as it applies to claim 33 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, disclose the claimed method, further including:
if the user selects to register, creating a user repository storing one or more unique receiver identifiers and associated one or more non-unique receiver identifiers (in Maxwell reference, Fig. 14, recipient database 1400 showing a user repository storing one or more unique receiver identifiers (recipient address in column 1440) and associated one or more non-unique receiver identifiers (recipient nickname id in column 1430); column 13, lines 33-67 which further disclose the same details).

Consider **claim 37**, and **as it applies to claim 35 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, disclose the claimed program storage device, further including: determining if the user is a registered user, and if it is determined that the user is not a registered user, requesting the user to register (in Maxwell reference, column 8, lines 52-58 which disclose that if the sender is not a registered user of system 10, an e-mail message will be returned to the sender, requesting the necessary information to register the sender; column 13, lines 33-37 which further disclose that the message validator 22 (shown in Fig. 2) also checks the recipient database 1400 (shown in Fig. 14) to determine whether recipients identified in the e-mail messages by senders have been previously registered with the system 10).

Consider **claim 38**, and **as it applies to claim 37 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, disclose the claimed program storage device, further including: if the user selects to register, creating a user repository storing one or more unique receiver identifiers and associated one or more non-unique receiver identifiers (in Maxwell reference, Fig. 14, recipient database 1400 showing a user repository storing one or more unique receiver identifiers (recipient address in column 1440) and associated one or more non-unique receiver identifiers (recipient nickname id in column 1430); column 13, lines 33-67 which further disclose the same details).

Consider **claim 45**, Sellen et al. show and disclose a method of directing communications in a communications network (Figs. 1-2 that show delivery via a digital communication network 32 (shown in Fig. 2) of a digital photograph 18 attached to an e-mail message 19 (both shown in Fig. 1); paragraph 0009 summarizing the delivery method); comprising:

receiving a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network (Fig. 1, non-unique receiver identifiers marked 20; communication network shown in Fig. 2; paragraph 0009 which discloses receiving at a digital camera processor a digital photograph included as an attachment to an e-mail for transmission to a recipient with a non-unique receiver identifier (e.g. Gran, Mum, Jane or John)).

However, Sellen et al. do not specifically disclose retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; determining from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication whether the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created; if it is determined that the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created, retrieving a unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; and creating a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier with the non-unique receiver identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Maxwell shows and discloses the claimed method, including:

retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication (flowchart of Fig. 7, step 660 that shows locating a recipient

from the e-mail sent by the sender; column 9, lines 48-62 which disclose retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication);

determining from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication whether the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created (flowchart of Fig. 7, step 670 that shows searching the recipient database (shown in Fig. 14) for the retrieved non-unique receiver identifier from the sent e-mail, and then determining in step 680, if the non-unique receiver identifier does not exist in the database and needs to be created; column 9, line 67 through column 10, lines 1-4 which disclose a prompting e-mail to the sender for providing details to create a record for the non-unique receiver identifier in the recipient database 1400);

if it is determined that the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created, retrieving a unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication and creating a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier with the non-unique receiver identifier (Fig. 14, recipient database 1400 showing sample recipient records; column 13, lines 33-67 further disclose the details of creating a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier (Recipient Address in column 1440 of Fig. 14) with the non-unique receiver identifier (Recipient Nickname ID in column 1430 of Fig. 14)).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to retrieve a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; determine from the non-unique

receiver identifier-enabled communication whether the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created; if it is determined that the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created, retrieve a unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; and create a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier with the non-unique receiver identifier., as taught by Maxwell, in the method of Sellen et al., so as to deliver messages in a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication network.

Consider **claim 46**, and as it applies to **claim 45** above, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, disclose the claimed method, further including: connecting the communication to the unique receiver identifier via the communications network (in Sellen et al. reference, Fig. 1, Delivery Format Selection Menu 14, type 28 (E-mail); paragraph 0059 that discloses the details of the e-mail delivery method).

Consider **claim 47**, Sellen et al. show and disclose a program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps of directing communications in a communications network (claims 10-15; Figs. 1-2 that show delivery via a digital communication network 32 (shown in Fig. 2) of a digital photograph 18 attached to an e-mail message 19 (both shown in Fig. 1); paragraph 0009 summarizing the delivery method); comprising: receiving a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication initiated by a user on a communications network (Fig. 1, non-unique receiver identifiers marked 20;

communication network shown in Fig. 2; paragraph 0009 which discloses receiving at a digital camera processor a digital photograph included as an attachment to an e-mail for transmission to a recipient with a non-unique receiver identifier (e.g. Gran, Mum, Jane or John)).

However, Sellen et al. do not specifically disclose retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; determining from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication whether the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created; if it is determined that the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created, retrieving a unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; and creating a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier with the non-unique receiver identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Maxwell shows and discloses the claimed method, including:

retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication (flowchart of Fig. 7, step 660 that shows locating a recipient from the e-mail sent by the sender; column 9, lines 48-62 which disclose retrieving a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication);

determining from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication whether the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created (flowchart of Fig. 7, step 670 that shows searching the recipient database (shown in Fig. 14) for the retrieved non-unique

receiver identifier from the sent e-mail, and then determining in step 680, if the non-unique receiver identifier does not exist in the database and needs to be created; column 9, line 67 through column 10, lines 1-4 which disclose a prompting e-mail to the sender for providing details to create a record for the non-unique receiver identifier in the recipient database 1400);

if it is determined that the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created, retrieving a unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication and creating a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier with the non-unique receiver identifier (Fig. 14, recipient database 1400 showing sample recipient records; column 13, lines 33-67 further disclose the details of creating a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier (Recipient Address in column 1440 of Fig. 14) with the non-unique receiver identifier (Recipient Nickname ID in column 1430 of Fig. 14)).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to retrieve a non-unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; determine from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication whether the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created; if it is determined that the non-unique receiver identifier needs to be created, retrieve a unique receiver identifier from the non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication; and create a mapping record associating the unique receiver identifier with the non-unique receiver identifier., as taught by Maxwell, in the program

storage device of Sellen et al., so as to deliver messages in a non-unique receiver identifier-enabled communication network.

Consider **claim 48**, and **as it applies to claim 47 above**, Sellen et al., as modified by Maxwell, disclose the claimed program storage device, further including: connecting the communication to the unique receiver identifier via the communications network (in Sellen et al. reference, Fig. 1, Delivery Format Selection Menu 14, type 28 (E-mail); paragraph 0059 that discloses the details of the e-mail delivery method).

Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Kulkarni (US Patent Publication # 2004/0093382 A1)**.

Consider **claim 24**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except wherein a plurality of unique users uses a single non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with a group of plurality of related unique receivers.

In the same field of endeavor, Kulkarni discloses the claimed method, wherein a plurality of unique users uses a single non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with a group of plurality of related unique receivers (Flowchart of Fig. 3, steps 307 and 310; Figs. 4A-4B that show a group-name 'team' in use, referring to a group of plurality of related unique receivers that may be used for communication by a number of unique users; paragraph 0038 discloses the details of the claimed method).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow a plurality of unique users to use a single non-unique receiver identifier to communicate with a group of plurality of related unique receivers, as taught by Kulkarni, in the method of Sellen et al., so as to be able to send a single e-mail message to a related group of recipients.

Claim 41 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Yairi (US Patent Application Publication # 2002/0152272 A1)** in view of **Meister et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2004/0103162 A1)**.

Consider **claim 41**, and as it applies to **claim 40** above, Yairi discloses the claimed system, except wherein the mapping repository further includes an active flag record associated with the non-unique receiver identifier for enabling or disabling communication to a receiver identified by the non-unique receiver identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Meister et al. discloses the claimed system, wherein the mapping repository further includes an active flag record associated with the non-unique receiver identifier for enabling or disabling communication to a receiver identified by the non-unique receiver identifier (Fig. 2, checkboxes 50 corresponding to active record flags associated with the non-unique receiver identifier (aliases 40) for enabling or disabling communication to a receiver identified by the non-unique receiver identifier (paragraphs 0028-0031 that further describe the claimed invention).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include in the mapping repository an active flag record associated with the non-unique receiver identifier for enabling or disabling communication to a receiver identified by the non-unique receiver identifier, as taught by Meister et al., in the method of Yairi, so as to prevent unauthorized messages (such as marketing@competition.com shown in Fig. 3) from being transmitted to recipients either unintentionally or by malicious design.

Claim 49 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Agraharam et al. (US Patent Publication # 5,987,508)**.

Consider **claim 49**, and as it applies to **claim 1** above, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except further including:
allowing user's unique-identifier to be modified; and automatically updating the record associated with the user to map data in the record to the user's modified unique-identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Agraharam et al. disclose the claimed method, further including:
allowing user's unique-identifier to be modified (in Agraharam et al. reference, flowchart of Fig. 3, steps 302, 304 and 305 which show how a registered user may change his or

her unique e-mail address (e.g. one shown in Fig. 1 as 2015558765@email.att.net) at a translation server 110; column 5, lines 58-66 describe the same details); and automatically updating the record associated with the user to map data in the record to the user's modified unique- identifier (in Agraharam et al. reference, flowchart of Fig. 3, step 306 which shows the record associated with the user to map data in the record to the user's modified unique- identifier being automatically updated; column 5, line 67 through column 6, line 1 describe the same details).

Claim 50 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Meister et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2004/0103162 A1)**.

Consider **claim 50**, and **as it applies to claim 1 above**, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except further including allowing the unique receiver identifier to be modified; and automatically updating data associated with the unique receiver identifier to be associated with the modified unique receiver identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Meister et al. disclose the claimed method, further including allowing the unique receiver identifier to be modified and automatically updating data associated with the unique receiver identifier to be associated with the modified unique receiver identifier (Fig. 2, "Modify Addressees" button 46; paragraph 0030, lines 6-11 that disclose allowing the unique receiver identifier (Address Field 42)

to be modified, including updating data associated with the unique receiver identifier to be associated with the modified unique receiver identifier).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow the unique receiver identifier to be modified and automatically updating data associated with the unique receiver identifier to be associated with the modified unique receiver identifier, as taught by Meister et al., in the method of Sellen et al., so as to send e-mail messages only to the authorized recipients.

Claim 51 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sellen et al. (US Patent Application Publication # 2003/0011682 A1)** in view of **Agraharam et al. (US Patent Publication # 5,987,508)** and further in view of **Gilbert (US Patent Application Publication # 2004/0054734 A1)**.

Consider **claim 51**, and as it applies to **claim 1** above, Sellen et al. disclose the claimed method, except further including automatically determining that the unique receiver identifier is no longer valid; automatically requesting a new unique receiver identifier from users that communicate with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier; if the new unique receiver identifier is received, automatically authenticating the new unique receiver identifier; and if the new unique receiver identifier is authenticated, automatically updating data associated with the unique receiver identifier to map to the new unique receiver identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Agraharam et al. disclose the claimed method, further including:

automatically determining that the unique receiver identifier is no longer valid (column 6, 58-67 through column 7, lines 1-3 which disclose that when a recipient's telephone number (and therefore associated e-mail address as shown in Fig. 1 as 2015558765@email.att.net) changes, the transaction server 110 and database 117 flag the previous telephone number as inactive and unassigned, but associate it with the new telephone number, so that any e-mail addressed to the old address may be redirected to the new e-mail address based on the new phone number, thus disclosing automatically determining that the unique receiver identifier is no longer valid);

if the new unique receiver identifier is received, automatically authenticating the new unique receiver identifier (column 7, lines 8-57 which disclose an authentication scenario involving change in the area code of the recipient's telephone number, such a change causing the recipient's PIN (derived from the telephone number with old area code) to become invalid; the system then automatically recalculating a new PIN based on the new area code in order to automatically authenticate the new unique receiver identifier; flowchart of Fig. 4 shows the steps involved in more details); and

if the new unique receiver identifier is authenticated, automatically updating data associated with the unique receiver identifier to map to the new unique receiver identifier (flowchart of Fig. 3, steps 302, 304, 305 and 306 that show how the system automatically updates data associated with the unique receiver identifier to map to the new unique receiver identifier, when the new unique receiver identifier is authenticated).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically determine that the unique receiver identifier is no longer valid, and if the new unique receiver identifier is received, automatically authenticate the new unique receiver identifier, and if the new unique receiver identifier is authenticated, automatically update data associated with the unique receiver identifier to map to the new unique receiver identifier, as taught by Agraharam et al., in the method of Sellen et al., so as to automatically direct e-mail messages sent to a recipient's old e-mail address to his or her new e-mail address.

However, Sellen et al. as modified by Agraharam et al., do not specifically disclose automatically requesting a new unique receiver identifier from users that communicate with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier.

In the same field of endeavor, Gilbert discloses the claimed method, further including automatically requesting a new unique receiver identifier from users that communicate with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier (Fig. 1; paragraph 0041 which discloses automatically requesting a new unique receiver identifier from an e-mail clearing house that communicates with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically request a new unique receiver identifier from users that communicate with a receiver associated with the unique receiver identifier, as taught by Gilbert in the method of Sellen et al., as modified by

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Agraharam et al., so as to automatically direct e-mail messages sent to a recipient's old e-mail address to his or her new e-mail address.

Conclusion

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Kishin G. Belani whose telephone number is (571) 270-1768. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Nathan Flynn can be reached on (571) 272-1915. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

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Kishin G. Belani

K.G.B./kgb

March 4, 2008

/Kenny S Lin/

Kenny S Lin

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2152